

Message Text

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ACTION INR-09

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FM AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3223

INFO RUSBAY / AMCONSUL BOMBAY 4005

AMCONSUL CALCUTTA

AMCONSUL MADRAS

C O N F I D E N T I A L NEW DELHI 3086

E. O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINR, PFOR, IN

SUBJ: T. N. KAUL, AMBASSADOR- DESIGNATE TO USA

REF : STATE 43774

SUMMARY. KAUL, LIKE NEHRU FAMILY, IS KASHMIRI BRAHMIN, SELF- ASSURED TO POINT OF ARROGANCE BY BIRTH. HIS CAREER, MOST NOTABLY AS AMBASSADOR TO MOSCOW AND MORE RECENTLY AS FOREIGN SECRETARY, HAS BEEN MARKED BY PRO- SOVIET BIAS AND CONCOMITANT ANTI- AMERICAN WORDS AND DEEDS. HOWEVER, HE IS ALSO A SENSITIVE WEATHERVANE OF INDIAN FOREIGN POLICY, ENJOYING MRS GANDHI' S CONFIDENCE WHILE FOREIGN SECRETARY. THUS, HE WILL SEEK TO IMPROVE RELATIONS WITH UNITED STATES, IF THAT IS GOI POLICY, AND WILL CRITICIZE OUR ACTIONS, IF SO INSTRUCTED. HOPEFULLY, HIS SENSE OF MISSION WILL OVERCOME OR MITIGATE HIS BRAHMANICAL DISDAIN FOR " MATERIALISTIC" AMERICAN AND HIS PREVIOUS MOSCOW ORIENTATION. END SUMMARY.

1. I HAVE NOT YET MET HIM, BUT ALL HERE AGREE HE INCLINED TOWARD SLYNESS, ESPECIALLY IN HIS DEALINGS WITH WESTERNERS. THIS LATTER QUALITY IS NOT ONLY KASHMIRI BRAHAMINACAL ARROGANCE, IT ALSO REFLECTS KAUL' S PROPENSITY FOR MISCONSTRUING CLEVERNESS FOR SOPHISTICATION IN DIPLOMATIC DEALINGS. AS THE BRITISH SAY, HE IS " TOO CLEVER BY HALF" , A CHARACTERISTIC WHICH MANY WESTERN CHIEFS OF MISSION IN NEW DELHI HAVE FOUND
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DISTASTEFUL AND TRYING. ONE NATO AMBASSADOR, UPON HEARING OF KAUL' S APPOINTMENT, SEIZED AN EMBASSY OFFICER BY THE LAPELS AND SUGGESTED THE UNITED STATES COULD NOT POSSIBLY EXTEND AGREEMENT TO KAUL. HE ALLUDED TO KAUL' S PRO- SOVIET ORIENTATION AND HIS FREQUENT ANTI- AMERICAN COMMENTS.

2. FORMER AMBASSADOR FOY KOHLER CHARACTERIZED KAUL APTLY AS " NOT IDEOLOGICALLY PRO- SOVIET AS SUCH, BUT RATHER A SLICK AMBITIOUS OPPORTUNIST WHO, HAVING ATTAINED STATUS AS A SPECIALIST ON COMMUNIST AFFAIRS, HAS HITCHED HIS WAGON TO THE STAR OF IMPROVED INDO- SOVIET RELATIONS" (MOSCOW A-162 OF JULY 26, 1966). WE SEE NO REASON TO FAULT THIS JUDGEMENT TODAY. IF MRS. GANDHI WANTS BETTER RELATIONS WITH US FOR REASONS OF INDIAN SELF- INTEREST KAUL WILL PURSUE THIS OBJECTIVE ASSIDUOUSLY AND INTELLIGENTLY. HE WILL DEFEND INDIAN INTERESTS AND POLICIES WITH VIGOR AND SKILL, AND WITHOUT INHIBITION AS TO TECHNIQUE AND STYLE.

3. WE HAVE NO EVIDENCE THAT KAUL HAS INDEPENDENT OR ORIGINAL VIEWS ON INDO/ PAKISTAN/ BANGLADESH PROBLEMS, OR OTHER MAJOR ISSUES. RATHER, HE IS SENSITIVE AND ANTICIPATORY OF GOI POLICY (ESPECIALLY MRS. GANDHI' S MOODS AND WHIMS) AND WILL DEFEND IT UNEQUIVOCALLY. IF THE WIND VEERS, HE SHIFTS WITH IT IMMEDIATELY. THIS WOULD BE EQUALLY TRUE OF CHANGES OF EMPHASIS IN INDO- SOVIET TIES.

4. KAUL' S EGO AND AMBITION COULD LEAD TO SOME INTERESTING EXPOSITIONS IN DEFENDING INDIAN POLICIES WHICH WE FIND IRRITATING AND AT TIMES DETRIMENTAL TO OUR INTERESTS. HE WILL WANT TO SUCCEED IN WASHINGTON-- IF GOI HAS OPTED FOR BETTER RELATIONS-- AND TO BE REMEMBERED AS THE MOST SUCCESSFUL INDIAN AMBASSADOR EVER. THUS, HE WILL SEEK TO CAJOLE, TO PERSUADE AND TO CONVINCE. EVEN TO THE POINT OF SOME DISTORTION IN HIS EXPLANATIONS OF INDIAN POLICY AND MOTIVATION. THESE SHOULD NOT BE MAJOR DEVIATIONS; CERTAINLY NOT ON ANY- THING AS IMPORTANT AS INDO- PAK RELATIONS.

5. IN SUM, KAUL, DESPITE SOME DIFFICULT MANNERISMS, COULD PROVE AN EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATIONS LINK BETWEEN AMERICAN AND INDIAN POLICY MAKERS, IF GOI INTERESTED IN IMPROVED RELATIONS. IF OUR RELATIONS GO SOUR, HE, LIKE HIS PREDECESSORS IN SIMILAR CIRCUMSTANCES, WILL BE LARGELY INEFFECTUAL, AND MORE
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PERSONALLY IRRITATING THAN MOST.

6. MRS. KAUL WILL NOT ACCOMPANY AMBASSADOR TO WASHINGTON
ALTHOUGH SHE MIGHT JOIN HIM SUBSEQUENTLY ACCORDING TO MEA.
THEIR CHILDREN ARE FULL GROWN.
MOYNIHAN

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